

Applicants have elected, with traverse, Group I: Claims 16-26, for further prosecution.

At the outset, Applicants note that the Examiner has not made a proper case under the PCT rules to support the lack of unity because the claims of Groups II-III depend from the claims of Group I. As such, the criteria for unity of invention are necessarily satisfied between these groups.

Applicants further traverse the Restriction Requirement on the grounds that the Office has not shown that a search of all of the claims would present an undue burden.

MPEP in subsection 803 states:

If the search and examination of an entire application can be made without a serious burden, the Examiner must examine it on the merits, even though it includes claims to distinct or independent inventions.

Applicants respectfully submit that a search of all the claims would not impose a serious burden on the Office.

Because unity of invention exists and because a search of all the claims would not impose a serious burden on the Office, the Applicants submit that the Office has not made out a proper case for restriction. Applicants therefore request the Restriction Requirement be withdrawn.

Finally, Applicants note that MPEP §821.04 states,

"if applicant elects claims directed to the product, and a product claim is subsequently found allowable, withdrawn process claims which depend from or otherwise include all the limitations of the allowable product claim will be rejoined."

Applicants respectfully submit that should the elected group be found allowable, the non-elected process claims should be rejoined.

Application No. 10/502,056

Reply to Restriction Requirement of March 31, 2005

Applicants submit this application is now in condition for examination on the merits  
and early notification of such action is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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Norman F. Oblon

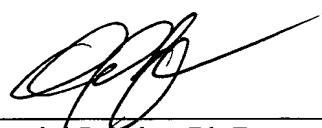
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